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Twenty-eighth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Africa
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Draft report

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Addendum

Follow-up to the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, and to the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem held in 2016, taking into consideration the ministerial segment to be held during the sixty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

1. At its first and second meetings on 17 September 2018, the Meeting considered agenda item 6 "Follow-up to the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, and to the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem held in 2016, taking into consideration the ministerial segment to be held during the sixty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs".

2. For its consideration of the item, the Meeting had before it the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem (E/2009/28, chap. I, sect. C) and the General Assembly resolution S-30/1 entitled "Our joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem".

3. The Secretary of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs made an audiovisual presentation under this agenda item. During the discussion of the item, statements were made by the representatives of Egypt, Sudan, South Africa, Angola, Morocco, Mauritius, Ghana, Gambia, Algeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire, Central African Republic, Benin, Namibia, Liberia, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Sao Tomé and Principe.

* Available only in Arabic, English and French, which are the working languages of the subsidiary body.

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4. In her presentation, the Secretary of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs provided the meeting with updated information on the status of preparations of the Commission for the ministerial segment of the 62nd session in March 2019.

5. The Secretary explained that in 2009, the Commission adopted the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, highlighting that five targets were set in the Political Declaration, with the year 2019 set as target date. It was reiterated that the targets included the elimination or significant reduction of the illicit cultivation of certain crops, of the illicit demand for drugs and related risks, of the illicit production and trafficking of psychotropic substances, of the diversion and illicit trafficking of precursors and of money-laundering related to illicit drugs. The Commission in 2014 conducted a midterm review of the progress made towards those targets, the results of which are contained in the Joint Ministerial Statement adopted.

6. Furthermore, it was recalled that the General Assembly in 2016 adopted the outcome document of the special session on the world drug problem, which had been negotiated by the Commission and for which it was conducting since 2016 an intense follow-up process. An overview was provided of the "four-parts approach" the Commission had taken, consisting of the thematic discussions within the Commission, the regional level contributions by the subsidiary bodies, the national implementation workshops provided by the Secretariat and the post-UNGASS website which was used as a repository of the information exchanged.

7. Information was also shared on the workplan of the Commission for the fall of 2018, where a series of intersessional meetings will be held with thematic and organizational segments, as well as a normative segment, in preparation for the ministerial-level meeting in 2019. At the reconvened 61st session in December 2018, the modalities for the ministerial segment were expected to be decided. The Chair of the Commission was also to present at that time an outline for the way beyond 2019, pursuant to Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 61/10. Also in this resolution it was decided that the ministerial segment will feature a general debate and two multi-stakeholder round tables.

8. Several speakers reaffirmed the commitment of their Governments to the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, the Joint Ministerial Statement and the outcome document of the General Assembly special session on drugs. It was noted that the three documents were complementary and mutually reinforcing and support was expressed for the preparatory process for the sixty-second session of the Commission to be held in 2019. Reference was also made to the impact that those three documents had on States' efforts to address the world drug problem at all levels.

9. Some speakers highlighted that 2019 was the target date of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action and that as such the mandate for the ministerial segment ought to be to take stock of and review those targets.

10. Several speakers also reaffirmed their Governments' continued commitment to the goals and objectives of the three international drug control conventions as the basis for ensuring the health, welfare and well-being of all people.

11. Support was expressed for the Commission as the policymaking body of the United Nations with prime responsibility for drug control matters and for the work of UNODC as the leading entity within the United Nations system for addressing and countering the world drug problem.

12. It was noted that a lot of progress had been made since 2009 in many countries and in Africa as a whole, in both drug supply and demand reduction, as well as in international cooperation. Some speakers highlighted that the area of health played a greater role in the drug strategies and implementation plans of African countries than in 2009, with prevention and treatment measures increasingly based on scientific evidence. Some speakers also reported on their Governments introducing harm reduction measures.

13. Some speakers reported on measures being taken by their Governments to improve the access to and availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes. Some noted that this was an issue of importance to Africa, which had been highlighted in the UNGASS outcome document and which has to be taken into consideration in the meeting in 2019.

14. A number of delegations reported on institutions that had been strengthened since 2009, such as financial intelligence units, as well as mechanisms coordinating the work of the various Government stakeholders involved in addressing drugs. Some delegations noted their Governments were in the process of revising drug related laws, using the UNGASS outcome document as a reference point.

15. It was also noted that drug trafficking and related offences continued to pose a major threat to security, health and the socioeconomic conditions in many countries. The importance of countering the cultivation, production, manufacturing and trafficking of drugs was noted and, in this regard, the principle of common and shared responsibility in the fight against drugs was highlighted.

16. Several speakers provided information on supply reduction measures taken at the national level, including by making reference to particular cases and seizures. The need to review and, if necessary, adapt national legislation to current challenges, as well as to strengthen border management measures, was also noted. The importance of reinforcing cooperation efforts at the national, subregional, regional and international levels was emphasized by several speakers, as was the need for continued exchanges of operational information and intelligence and for elaborating specific cooperation initiatives for the African region. The importance of capacity-building and training was also highlighted in this regard.

17. Concern was expressed regarding the alarming dimensions of cocaine trafficking from Latin America through the African region. The increase in heroin trafficking was also highlighted by some delegations. Many countries reported on the challenges experienced by transit countries.

18. Several speakers emphasized that the cultivation of and trafficking in cannabis continued to be a major concern for countries in the African region and mentioned efforts taken at the national level to reduce cannabis cultivation. The need for efforts on income-generating activities for farmers as well as on integrated social development and alternative development was highlighted. Fighting poverty and reducing exclusion and stigma were considered key in addressing the world drug problem.

19. Many speakers also highlighted the strong increase in the use and trafficking of tramadol, which was part of the new substances and trends, that had not existed in 2009. It was noted that the detection of the substance posed a challenge as it was also sold in pharmacies, however at lower levels of potency.

20. Appreciation was expressed for the tools initiated by the International Narcotics Control Board assisting States to address the threats posed by precursor chemicals and new psychoactive substances, respectively. Reference was made by some speakers to joint activities undertaken in the framework of the Colombo Plan.

21. A number of speakers referred to the increasing abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances among children and youth and reaffirmed their commitment to addressing this issue. Several delegations reported on awareness-raising measures taken in this regard, such as training related to drug use prevention in schools. One delegation reported on improvements made in the juvenile justice system with possible referral to treatment programmes or training opportunities.